

Mandatory Vaccines, Mask-wearing, and Freedom

PHIL 334: Pandemic Ethics



Contents:
Risk Imposition discussion
Mandatory Vaccines &
Mask-wearing
Coercion & Freedom

Risk

A brief review of Judy Jarvis Thomson's view about Risk Impositions and three questions to discuss.

Risk Imposition Discussion Questions

1. **Pure Risk Imposition.**
Is it wrong to impose a risk on someone *even if the harm doesn't eventuate?* (If so, why?)

JJT on Risk Impositions



Cases of pure risk imposition.

Is it morally wrong to subject someone to a risk *even if the harm doesn't eventuate*?

4. Cases of the third kind are pure. Suppose A played Russian roulette on B. B has ground for complaint against A even if B was caused no harm (no bullet was under the firing pin when A fired), and even if B was unaware of what happened, so that he was caused no fear or discomfort. The ground for complaint lies in the fact that A imposed a risk of death on B.

Risk Imposition Discussion Questions

1. **Pure Risk Imposition.**
Is it wrong to impose a risk on someone *even if the harm doesn't eventuate*? (If so, why?)
2. **Sufficiently High Risk.**
What counts as a "sufficiently high" risk? Can risk be subjective?

JJT on Risk Impositions



Interesting View

(1) You ought not **impose a high risk of death on your neighbor**.

(2) It is permissible for you to **push the button**.

(IP*) If you ought not **impose a high risk of death on your neighbor**, then if it's the case that if you **push the button**, you will thereby **impose a high risk of death on your neighbor**, then you ought not **push the button**.

These three **aren't** inconsistent!

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3. **Consenting to Risk.**
Is contracting COVID-19 at the bar more like the Mugging case or the Lottery Ticket case?

JJT on Risk & Consent



Example:

Justice Posner's Lottery Ticket



Unpleasant Way Mugging



What's the difference?!?

What about the risks of exposing others to COVID-19? (Lang's Example)
Is that more like Lotto Ticket or Mugging?

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What counts as a "sufficiently high" risk? Can risk be subjective?
- 3. Consenting to Risk.**
Is contracting COVID-19 at the bar more like the Mugging case or the Lottery Ticket case?

Mandatory Vaccines & Mandatory Mask-wearing

Daniel Holliday · Dec 21, 2020 · 9 min read

Should a Covid-19 Vaccine Be Mandatory?



Amarilio Costello · Jan 25 · 9 min read

Does Mandatory Mask-Wearing Restrict Individual Freedom?



Dilemma:

- (1) Undermines freedom
- (2) Necessary to end pandemic

Should _____ Be Mandatory?

Mandatory

If you don't ____, we withhold benefits from you.

Coercive

If you don't ____, we punish you.

Halliday's Argument

Status Quo:

Coercive measures to deal with COVID-19 (e.g., *lockdowns*)

Mandatory Vaccine:

A mandatory vaccine is a weaker instance of coercion than the status quo.

"So, if we think there is a moral problem with government coercion, we may think that coercing people to accept a vaccine is in fact the lesser evil compared to the status quo."

Halliday's Argument

Status Quo:

Coercive measures to deal with COVID-19 (e.g., *lockdowns*)

Mandatory Vaccine:

A mandatory vaccine is a weaker instance of coercion than the status quo.

Equity:

Coercive measure with unequal burdens are worse than those with equal burdens.

Mandatory Vaccines would burden everyone equally (whereas lockdowns have unequal burdens).

Halliday's Argument

Fairness & Free-Riding:

What if people would take the vaccine *voluntarily*?

Still there's an argument to make it mandatory:

Free-riders treat us unfairly

Equity:

Coercive measure with unequal burdens are worse than those with equal burdens.

Mandatory Vaccines would burden everyone equally (whereas lockdowns have unequal burdens).